

U. S. RED DEFECTOR MAY SCORE STALIN

Clark of Daily Worker Said to Term Crimes Worse Than Soviet Admits

By HARRY SCHWARTZ

New revelations about Stalinist terror in the Soviet Union may follow the defection of an American Communist who personally witnessed the last three years of Stalin's rule.

The resignation of Joseph Clark as foreign editor of The Daily Worker and as a member of the Communist party was confirmed Friday night by William Z. Foster, honorary chairman of the party. Mr. Clark served as The Daily Worker's Moscow correspondent from mid-1950 to three months after Stalin's death in March, 1953.

Friends of Mr. Clark reported yesterday they had expected his resignation because he had long ago made clear in private conversation his disillusionment with the Soviet brand of communism. They said that his comments indicated he knew from personal observations in the Soviet Union that the terror and crimes committed under Stalin were far greater even than those revealed by Nikita S. Khrushchev in his secret speech in February, 1956.

Chary With Information

When reached by telephone at his summer home yesterday Mr. Clark declined any information other than the following statement:

"I regret that my old friend Bill Foster made his statement to The New York Times. What I have to say in this matter will appear in The Daily Worker."

Mr. Clark was apparently being sarcastic. The enmity between him and Mr. Foster has long been well known to persons familiar with the Communist movement here. Mr. Clark's statement seemed therefore an oblique manner of chiding

Mr. Foster, whose faction has attacked Howard Fast, the novelist, for giving the first extended statement of his defection from the Communist party to The New York Times.

John Gates, editor of The Daily Worker, said yesterday that the newspaper had a 2,500-word letter from Mr. Clark that would be published soon.

Since publication here of Mr. Khrushchev's attack on Stalin, Mr. Clark has been quoted as having said: "Khrushchev was the bloodiest of the Soviet tyrants. He is elbow-deep in the blood he shed in the Ukraine while he ruled there." Mr. Khrushchev was Communist party chief of the Ukraine from 1938 to late 1949 and is now First Secretary of the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

In "The Writer and the Commissar," an article scheduled to be published shortly, Mr. Fast has given additional evidence of Mr. Clark's disillusionment. The article quotes Mr. Clark as having said that if Mr. Fast and Paul Robeson, the singer, had spoken up in 1949 against the Communist persecution of Jews, some Jewish writers who were murdered in the Soviet Union might still be alive.

Writings Show Disillusionment

Some of Mr. Clark's disillusionment has been apparent in the last year in the foreign affairs column he wrote for The Daily Worker. His comments on the Soviet Union's crushing of the Hungarian revolution, the virtual repudiation of state bonds sold to Soviet citizens, the Soviet attitude toward Jewish culture, and other issues has often diverged from the Moscow propaganda line.

Mr. Clark has been identified with the "rightist" faction in the American Communist party, generally considered to be under the leadership of The Daily Worker's editor, Mr. Gates.

Mr. Clark's defection appears to be another sign of the weakening of the "rightist" faction in the American Communist party. Sources close to the party have reported that rightists have left the party in significant numbers, leaving the much-shrunken party composed largely of "Muscovite" hardcore supporters of Mr. Foster and his associate, Benjamin Davis Jr., former New York City Councilman.